

COINS FROM THE LATE BYZANTINE REMAINS NEAR SHIQMONA

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Twenty-one coins were found during the 1999 excavation of a late Byzantine monastery and adjacent buildings and installations east of Tel Shiqmona (see Kletter, this volume). Fifteen coins were identified:¹ fourteen belong to one continuous period, beginning in the early fourth century and ending in the reign of the Byzantine emperor Justin II (565–578 CE), and one is an Ayyûbid copper *fals*. The Byzantine coins include three small bronze coins from the fourth–fifth centuries, four Vandalic bronze coins, and seven post-reform Byzantine bronze coins dating to the sixth century. The coins were discovered in four concentrations: in the remains of a monastery chapel, in Buildings A and B, within the winepress and in the surface material above the winepress. The identified coins are discussed below according to finding spot.

Two coins were found in the chapel: an Ayyubid *fals* (Cat. No. 15) and a Vandalic bronze (Cat. No. 13). The *fals*, dated to the twelfth–thirteenth centuries CE, was found above a plaster floor (L204), but in a disturbed context. A small Vandalic bronze, dated from the mid-fifth until the mid-sixth centuries CE, was discovered in the floor bedding (L217); unfortunately, it only gives an approximate date range for the construction of the mosaic floor and the entire chapel, as its context was not completely secure (see Kletter, this volume).

Three coins were found in Buildings A and B. Two coins, a small bronze dated to the fourth century (Cat. No. 1) and a *half-follis* minted in Antioch between 539–554 in the reign of Justinian I (Cat. No. 7), were found above the walls of Building A. A small Vandalic bronze (Cat. No.12), dated until the mid-



Fig. 1.

sixth century CE, came from a mixed context. Although these coins only approximately date the buildings, coins discovered during an earlier excavation of buildings to the west—apparently part of the same structure (‘Ad and Torge, forthcoming)—show that it may have been erected during the first half of the sixth century (Kool, forthcoming). This date accords well with the dating of pottery from this area to the sixth–seventh centuries CE (see Calderon, this volume).

Three coins (Cat. Nos. 6, 8, 11) were found in the refuse in one of the three collecting vats (L5) of the winepress south of Buildings A and B. All date to the sixth century. The latest is a bronze *folles* of Justinian I, struck in Cyzicus in 556/7 (Cat. No. 8). The vat presumably ceased to function for the collection of wine and became a refuse pit after this date. The construction and function of the winepress can thus be dated to a period before the mid-sixth century. Pottery sherds from the refuse of Vat 5 largely date to the sixth–seventh centuries, confirming this date (see Calderon, this volume).




The remaining seven coins were found above the winepress. They include two fourth–fifth centuries bronze *nummi* (Cat. Nos. 2, 3), three sixth-century, post-reform Byzantine *pentanummi* (Cat. Nos. 4, 5, 10), a half-*folles*

(Cat. No. 9), and a Vandalic bronze (Cat. No. 14) found in stratified context.


Comparison with numismatic material from excavations in 1994 and 1998 at the same site show close similarities in periodization and type of coins in circulation. Notable is a virtual absence of coins dating prior to the fourth century and later than the reign of Maurice (582–602). The coins from all three excavations belong to one continuous period beginning in the early fourth centuries and ending toward the end of Maurice’s reign (late 590s).

At nearby Tel Shiqmona, a large Byzantine-period village or harbor town with a mixed population of Jews and Christians, numismatic finds are of a typical repertoire of small fourth–fifth centuries and post-reform Byzantine bronze coins (Amitai-Preiss 2006:163–172; Hirschfeld 2006; ‘Ad and Torge, forthcoming; Kool, forthcoming). The latter group is dominated by the small denomination *pentanummi* and *nummi* that circulated in the first half of the sixth century. Noteworthy is the presence of relatively large numbers of Vandalic *nummi*, minted in Carthage, that were used as small change and circulated in large quantities throughout the Eastern Mediterranean (Bijovsky 1998:84–85).

CATALOGUE

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	IAA No.
Byzantine (Fourth–Fifth Centuries)											
1	216	2107	0.85	10	↓	[- -] Bust r.	[- -] Figure stg. r.				76340
2	2	1012	0.76	10		[- -] Bust r.	Illegible				76331
3	2	1007	1.23	19		[- -] Bust r.	Illegible				76330
518–538 CE – <i>Pentanummius</i>											
4*	3	1002	2.30	12	↓	[- -] Bust r.	Monogram  To r.: E			DOC 1:82, No. 35	76336
5	2	1079	1.28	12	↑	[- -] Bust r.	Monogram 			Same	76334
6	5	1040	1.79	13	↑	[- -] Bust r.	Monogram 			Same	76338
Justinian I (527–565) – <i>Half-Follis</i>											
7	216	2120	6.53	24	✓	[DN IVSTINI–ANVS P]P V Bust facing, diademed and plumed helmet. In r. hand, globe crucis	K Above, cross; to l.: AN/ N/O; to r.: II; below: B	539–554	Antioch	DOC 1:149, No. 238	76341
<i>Follis</i>											
8*	5	1059	16.00	32	↑	DN IVSTINI[–ANVS] PP AV Bust facing, diademed and plumed helmet, wearing cuirass. In r. hand, globe crucis, in l. hand, cross	M Above, cross; to l.: AN/ N/O; to r.: XXX; beneath: B In ex.: KYZ	556/7	Cyzicus	DOC 1:130, No. 180b	76339
Justin II (565–578) – <i>Half-Follis</i>											
9*	2	1036	6.22	18	↓	DN IVSTI–NVS PP AV Justin and Sophia facing, enthroned	K To l.: [A]/N/N/O; to r.: XII; below: G	575–578	Thessalonica	DOC 1:224, No. 82	76333
Sixth Century											
10	2	2005	14.67	31	↓		M Above, cross; to r. cross				76335

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	IAA No.
Vandals (Until Mid-Sixth Century)											
11	5	1020	0.69	8	?	[- - -] Bust r., diademed			Carthage	<i>BMCV</i> : 26, No. 68	76337
12	223	2194	0.34	6	?	[- - -] Bust r. (?)	Same		Same	Same	76344
13*	217	2131	0.53	7		Illegible	Same		Same	Same	76342
14	2	1027	0.51	7		Illegible	Same		Same	Same	76332
Ayyubid (Twelfth–Thirteenth Centuries) – <i>Fds</i>											
15	204	2069	3.59	20		Illegible	Illegible			Same	76343

NOTE

¹ The coins were cleaned in the IAA laboratory under the direction of Lena Kuperschmidt and photographed by Clara Amit.

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